

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P R 101521Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
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INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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AMEMBASSY OSLO
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AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
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TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, NATO, FR
SUBJ: FRANCE AND THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE

REFS: A. PARIS 2315. B. PARIS 5472. C. USNATO 1051.

1. IN REF A THE AMBASSADOR PROVIDED HIS RECOMMENDA-
TIONS TO THE SECRETARY FOR OVERALL US POLICY TOWARDS

FRANCE. THIS MESSAGE DESCRIBES FRANCE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE AND US TACTICS WHICH CAN HELP TO AUGMENT THE FRENCH ROLE AND THUS ENHANCE THE US NATIONAL INTEREST.

2. BEGIN SUMMARY: FRANCE WILL REMAIN OUTSIDE THE NATO INTEGRATED MILITARY COMMAND AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE A DIFFICULT PARTNER ON DEFENSE ISSUES. BUT THERE ARE MEASURES WHICH CAN BE TAKEN WITH FRANCE TO ENHANCE US INTERESTS IN EUROPEAN DEFENSE AND NATO. WE RECOMMEND:

A. A TAILORED APPROACH TO FACILITATE FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN THE NATO AWACS SYSTEM (PARA 6 BELOW).

B. FACILITATION OF THE LICENSING OF PRODUCTION OF US MILITARY EQUIPMENT IN FRANCE (PARA 7 BELOW).

C. A DIALOGUE WITH THE GOF ON US ARMS CONTROL OBJECTIVES AND VERIFICATION (PARA 8 BELOW).

D. THAT ON NATO POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS WE AVOID ACTIONS WHICH WILL CONFRONT THE FRENCH WITH DECISIONS ON WHICH THEY ARE OBLIGED TO STAND ON PRINCIPLE (PARA 9 BELOW).

FINALLY, WE CONCLUDE THAT THE US INTEREST AND THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE ARE BETTER SERVED BY THE CURRENT GOF THAN BY THE SOCIALIST/COMMUNIST COALITION WHICH MAY COME TO POWER NEXT YEAR. END SUMMARY.

3. DESPITE OCCASIONAL REFERENCES AND PUBLIC POSTURING RE A "TOUS AZIMUTS" DEFENSE POSTURE AGAINST ANY ADVERSARY, BOTH THE AVERAGE FRENCHMAN AND THE POLITICAL SECRET

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CLASS ARE UNDER NO ILLUSIONS AS TO WHERE THE THREAT COMES FROM: THE WARSAW PACT. THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT, UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF PRESIDENT GISCARD, CAN BE COUNTED ON IN A CRISIS TO STAND WITH ITS NATO ALLIES. THIS IS NOT TO SUGGEST THAT THE FRENCH WILL BE EASY TO DEAL WITH ON DEFENSE AND NATO ISSUES. FIERCELY JEALOUS OF ITS NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND AUTONOMY OF DECISION, FRANCE WILL REFRAIN FROM PUBLIC ACTIONS WHICH COULD SUGGEST THAT IT IS KNUCKLING UNDER TO US OR ALLIANCE PRESSURE ON DEFENSE ISSUES. THUS NO CONCEIVABLE FRENCH GOVERNMENT WILL LEAD FRANCE BACK INTO THE NATO INTEGRATED MILITARY COMMAND. ON OTHER ISSUES, SUCH AS PARTICIPATION IN THE NATO SUMMIT IN MAY IN LONDON, FRANCE WILL PROBABLY ONCE AGAIN BE REPRESENTED BY ITS FOREIGN MINISTER. SUCH PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS OF AUTONOMY WILL PROBABLY INCREASE OVER THE NEXT YEAR AS THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT STRIVES TO REAFFIRM ITS INDEPENDENCE IN THE FACE OF A SERIOUS THREAT THAT THE SOCIALIST/COMMUNIST COALITION WILL COME TO POWER IN

THE 1978 LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS.

4. IN PRIVATE TOO FRANCE WILL BE PRICKLY AND DIFFICULT
TO DEAL WITH ON DEFENSE ISSUES, WHETHER THE SUBJECT BE

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NATO POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS, ARMAMENTS STANDARDIZATION,
OR BILATERAL MILITARY COOPERATION. THIS UNPUBLICIZED

ATTITUDE REFLECTS THE SAME SACRED FRENCH CONCEPT OF
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INDEPENDENCE, THE HERITAGE AND NOW EXAGGERATED MEMORY OF DE GAULLE'S POLICIES, AND GENUINE DIFFERENCES OF SUBSTANCE WITH THE US AND OTHER ALLIES ON SOME ISSUES (E.G., A CTB). IT IS ALSO A REFLECTION OF THE FRENCH VIEW OF TRILATERALISM REPORTED IN REF B: THE GOF SEES THE EC NINE RATHER THAN NATO AS THE EUROPEAN FACTOR IN THE EQUATION WITH NORTH AMERICA AND JAPAN.

5. HOW THEN ARE US INTERESTS AFFECTED? THE US, COMMITTED TO THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE WITH ITS ALLIES IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY, WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A FRANCE WHICH IS UNEQUIVOCALLY COMMITTED TO THE COMMON DEFENSE, WHICH ACCEPTS THE DOCTRINE OF FLEXIBLE RESPONSE, AND WHICH WOULD COOPERATE REGULARLY AND MEANINGFULLY ON DEFENSE AND POLITICAL ISSUES. SUCH WILL NOT BE THE CASE, AS IT HAS NOT BEEN FOR MORE THAN A DECADE. THEREFORE, IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO REALIZE FULLY US INTERESTS VIS-A-VIS FRANCE AND THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE. INDEED, AS THE 1978 ELECTIONS DRAW NEAR WE MAY FIND THE GOF EVEN MORE DIFFICULT WITH WHICH TO DEAL. BUT THERE WILL REMAIN AREAS FOR COOPERATION WHICH, IF CAREFULLY HANDLED, CAN ENHANCE OUR INTEREST IN A STRONGER EUROPEAN DEFENSE. WHILE EXPLORING THESE AREAS FOR COOPERATION, WE SHOULD NOT LEAD THE FRENCH TO BELIEVE THAT THEY CAN HAVE A FREE RIDE IN NATO TO THE DETRIMENT OF BASIC ALLIANCE INTERESTS. WE CAN MAKE PRUDENT REPRESENTATIONS ON THE FRENCH PERFORMANCE IN BRUSSELS BUT SHOULD DO SO WITHOUT THE HOPE OF ACCOMPLISHING A SPECTACULAR CONVERSION.

6. ON AWACS, THE GOF HAS ONLY BELATEDLY COME TO REALIZE THAT THERE CAN BE DOMESTIC POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RETURNS FROM FRENCH PARTICIPATION, CONTINGENT ON NATO'S ACQUISITION OF THE GE/SNECMA CFM-56 ENGINE FOR THE AWACS FLEET. FRENCH PARTICIPATION COULD BE THE KEY FACTOR IN MAKING THE NATO-WIDE PROGRAM A
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SUCCESS AND GENUINELY ENHANCING NATO'S EARLY WARNING AND AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM. TO OBTAIN FRENCH PARTICIPATION, THE US (AND THE OTHER ALLIES) WILL HAVE TO MAKE ALLOWANCES FOR FRENCH SENSITIVITIES AND TAILOR THE PACKAGE TO MAKE IT ATTRACTIVE ENOUGH FOR THE GOF TO SELL AT

HOME. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT FRANCE SHOULD PAY LESS THAN ITS FAIR FULL SHARE; WE SHOULD INSIST ON THIS. RECOMMENDATION: WE SHOULD TRY TO EASE THE WAY FOR THE FRENCH BY ALLOWING FRANCE TO BUY ITS "OWN" AIRCRAFT TO BE BASED IN FRANCE UNDER THE FRENCH FLAG, BUT FULLY INTEGRATED INTO THE NATO SYSTEM. TO WORK THIS OUT WE MAY HAVE TO LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN FOR THE FRENCH BEYOND THE MARCH 25 NATO DEFENSE MINISTERS' MEETING ON AWACS.

7. A MAJOR OBJECTIVE OF US DEFENSE POLICY IN EUROPE IS TO ENHANCE STANDARDIZATION AND INTEROPERABILITY OF ARMAMENTS AMONG THE ALLIES. WHILE THE FRENCH HAVE LAGGED BEHIND ON THE STANDARDIZATION ISSUE FOR FEAR THAT IT WILL MEAN THE DEATH OF THE EUROPEAN ARMAMENTS INDUSTRY, THERE IS A PRAGMATIC FRENCH INTEREST IN INTEROPERABILITY AND CO-PRODUCTION. THE ROLAND AIR DEFENSE MISSILE PROGRAM IS AN EXAMPLE OF THIS. RECOMMENDATION: THAT WE ATTEMPT TO BUILD ON THIS PRAGMATIC FRENCH APPROACH BY FACILITATING THE LICENSING OF PRODUCTION OF US MILITARY EQUIPMENT IN FRANCE FOR THOSE SYSTEMS IN WHICH THE FRENCH ARE INTERESTED.

8. VERIFIABLE AND EQUITABLE ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS ARE A PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF US SECURITY POLICY. THE GOF RECOGNIZES THAT SUCH CAN BE THE CASE AND DOES NOT REJECT ARMS CONTROL OUT OF HAND. THE ABM TREATY OF 1972 IS VALUED ENORMOUSLY BY SOPHISTICATED FRENCH SECURITY PLANNERS BECAUSE THEY REALIZE HOW VITAL IT IS TO THE CREDIBILITY OF THE FRENCH STRATEGIC DETERRENT. ONE OF THE CENTRAL FRENCH OBJECTIONS TO MBFR IS A DEEPLY HELD CONVICTION THAT AN ULTIMATE AGREEMENT
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WILL BE INHERENTLY UNVERIFIABLE. WE CAN BE CONFIDENT THAT IF WE PRESENT THE FRENCH WITH A SERIES OF "FAITS ACCOMPLIS" IN EITHER ARMS CONTROL INITIATIVES OR AGREEMENTS, THE FRENCH REACTION MAY BE LESS THAN SUPPORTIVE. RECOMMENDATION: THAT WE ENGAGE THE FRENCH, WITHIN

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THE LIMITS OF SECURITY, IN A DIALOGUE ON WHAT OUR ARMS
CONTROL OBJECTIVES ARE AND HOW WE INTEND TO VERIFY
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9. NATO POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS HAVE BEEN A FREQUENT
IRRITANT BETWEEN THE US AND FRANCE. US MISSION NATO
PRESENTED OPTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT IN REF C. WE AGREE
WITH MUCH OF THE ANALYSIS IN THAT MESSAGE, BUT WOULD
POINT OUT THE FRENCH MILITARY PER SE DO NOT CARRY
GREAT WEIGHT IN THE FRENCH POLITICAL EQUATION. THUS
WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT GISCARD'S WILLINGNESS TO GRANT
APPROVAL FOR QUIET FRENCH-NATO MILITARY COOPERATION

ON THE PRESENT SCALE IS ATTRIBUTABLE TO PRESSURES ARISING FROM WITHIN THE FRENCH MILITARY (THOUGH THAT MAY BE A FACTOR), BUT RATHER FROM GISCARD'S RECOGNITION THAT THE US AND NATO ARE INDISPENSABLE TO THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE. US NATO POSED THREE OPTIONS FOR DEALING WITH FRENCH ATTITUDES TOWARD NATO POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS:

A. MAINTAIN OUR EFFORTS TO PROMOTE CONSULTATIONS, TRYING TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS ON AN AD HOC BASIS, AND AVOIDING POSING TO THE FRENCH QUESTIONS OF PRINCIPLE.

B. NARROW NATO CONSULTATIONS BY RESTRAINING OUR PROPOSALS FOR CONSULTATIONS ON ISSUES OUTSIDE THE TREATY AREA. US NATO STATED THAT THIS WOULD "DEEPLY DISAPPOINT OUR EUROPEAN PARTNERS WHO FAVOR STRENGTHENING NATO'S ROLE." WE WOULD BE INTERESTED TO SEE COMMENTS FROM OTHER NATO CAPITALS.

C. MAKE CLEAR TO THE GOF AT HIGH LEVEL THE IMPORTANCE THE US ATTACHES TO NATO CONSULTATIONS.... STRESSING "THAT IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN BROAD US AND ALLIED PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR NATO'S DEFENSIVE EFFORTS, FROM WHICH THE FRENCH BENEFIT, NATO MUST BE SEEN AS ACTIVE NOT ONLY IN THE MILITARY SPHERE, BUT ON BROADER ISSUES IN THE POLITICAL SPHERE." WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE GOF WOULD ACCEPT THAT PREMISE. THE FRENCH VIEW NATO AS FIRST AND FOREMOST A DEFENSIVE MILITARY ALLIANCE WHOSE "RAISON D'ETRE" IS DETERRENCE AGAINST ATTACK IN A DELINEATED GEOGRAPHIC AREA. CONSULTATIONS
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ON "BROADER ISSUES" ARE NOT A "SINE QUA NON" FOR DETERRENCE AGAINST THE EAST, AND THE FRENCH WOULD BE QUICK TO POINT THIS OUT.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT WE CONTINUE THE POLICY SET FORTH IN STATE 034957 THAT WE AVOID ACTIONS WHICH WILL CONFRONT THE FRENCH WITH DECISIONS ON WHICH THEY ARE OBLIGED TO STAND ON PRINCIPLE.

10. A FRENCH GOVERNMENT OF THE LEFT AND DEFENSE:

DURING THE NEXT YEAR WE CAN ASSIST THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT BY HELPING IT TO LOOK BETTER TO ITS PUBLIC: PERHAPS THE SOVEREIGN "FRENCH AWACS" WITH THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL REWARDS WHICH ACCRUE THEREFROM IS THE MOST APPEALING. WE COULD CONCEIVABLY ASSIST GISCARD IN HIS ELECTION CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE LEFT BY PRESENTING HIM WITH A SERIES OF CONFRONTATIONAL ISSUES WITH WHICH HE COULD DEMONSTRATE HIS INDEPENDENCE AND VIGILANT PROTECTION OF FRENCH INTERESTS AGAINST US ATTEMPTS AT "HEGEMONY." BUT THE LATTER WOULD REDOUND AGAINST US INTERESTS AND THEREFORE SHOULD BE EXCLUDED.

11. WHAT IF THE SOCIALIST/COMMUNIST COALITION COMES TO POWER IN 1978? THE COMMON PROGRAM OF 1972 TELLS US THAT A LEFT GOVERNMENT WOULD INTER ALIA (IN ROUGH SUMMARY):

- A. RENOUNCE THE FRENCH NUCLEAR FORCE.
- B. CEASE NUCLEAR TESTING AND ADHERE TO THE LTBT AND NPT.
- C. JOIN THE CCD.
- D. REGULATE STRICTLY THE EXPORTS OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS.
- E. REFUSE TO REINTEGRATE FRANCE INTO THE NATO MILITARY COMMAND.
- F. REDUCE LENGTH OF SERVICE FOR CONSCRIPTS TO SIX MONTHS.
- G. FAVOR THE SIMULTANEOUS DISSOLUTION OF NATO

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AND THE WARSAW PACT.

- H. TAKE THE INITIATIVE FOR A NEW EUROPEAN SECURITY ORGANIZATION INCLUDING ALL THE CSCE SIGNATURES.

- I. PROMOTE NUCLEAR FREE ZONES IN CENTRAL EUROPE; ENCOURAGE MBFR.

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12. ADMITTEDLY, A FIVE-YEAR OLD CAMPAIGN PLATFORM IS
NOT AN ACCURATE GUIDE. BUT ONE THEME OFTEN HEARD
THESE DAYS FROM BOTH SOCIALISTS AND COMMUNISTS IS THAT,
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WHEN IN POWER, A LEFT GOVERNMENT WOULD BE PREPARED TO
DISCUSS US-FRENCH DEFENSE RELATIONS, INCLUDING A
RENEGOTIATION OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY, SO AS IN
SOME UNDEFINED WAY TO ENHANCE FRANCE'S ROLE. A LEFT
GOVERNMENT MIGHT WELL ENTHUSIASTICALLY ENDORSE
"BROADER POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS" IN NATO--TO THE
DETRIMENT OF US AND ALLIANCE INTERESTS ASSUMING THAT
A LEFT GOVERNMENT WILL NOT NECESSARILY ADOPT POSITIONS
COMPATIBLE WITH OUR VIEWS. THEN THERE IS THE UNAVOID-
ABLE REALITY THAT THE COMMUNISTS WILL HOLD CABINET
PORTFOLIOS IF THE LEFT COMES TO POWER. THE SOCIALISTS
TELL US NOT TO WORRY, THAT THE COMMUNISTS WILL NOT GET
NEAR DEFENSE, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, OR INTERIOR. BUT, AS
FORMER FRENCH PERMREP TO NATO DE ROSE HAS TOLD US, A
LEFT GOVERNMENT CANNOT EXCLUDE ITS COMMUNIST PARTNERS
FROM ALL ISSUES BEARING ON DEFENSE, FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
OR SECURITY. DE ROSE ASKS RHETORICALLY IF THE
SOCIALISTS WILL ASK THE COMMUNIST MINISTERS TO LEAVE
THE WEEKLY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETINGS EACH TIME THE
AGENDA REACHES SENSITIVE ISSUES. WHILE COUNCIL OF
MINISTERS MEETINGS CONSTITUTE THE FORMAL STRUCTURE FOR
DISCUSSING GENERAL POLICY AND ITS WORK OFTEN AMOUNTS
TO PROFORMA APPROVAL AFTER THOROUGH GOVERNMENT STAFF
WORK, WE MUST ASSUME--GIVEN THE OVERLAPPING RESPONSI-

BILITIES OF MINISTRIES ON MANY OF THESE SUBJECTS--THAT
THE COMMUNISTS WILL INDEED HAVE THEIR FINGERS IN THE
DEFENSE/FOREIGN AFFAIRS/SECURITY PIE.

14. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE US? WE BELIEVE THAT
IT MEANS THAT NO MATTER HOW PRICKLY AND DIFFICULT THE
CURRENT GOF MAY BE ON NATO AND DEFENSE ISSUES, THE
US INTEREST AND THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE ARE FAR BETTER
SERVED BY THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT THAN BY THE LEFT
COALITION WHICH WAITS IN THE WINGS.
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